

REMARKS

Claims 1-8 and 12 are currently pending in the application. By this paper, independent claims 1 and 12 have been amended and claim 7 has been canceled.

The present invention is directed to a filter system for use in a reactor in which a housing is attached to the reactor. The filter is retractable into the housing when it is necessary to remove the filter from the reactor for repair or replacement. The current amendments to independent claims 1 and 12 more clearly define this aspect of the invention. As currently amended, claims 1 and 12 require that the housing has at least one sealing device for sealing the aperture between the reactor and the housing, so that when the filter means is retracted within the housing past the aperture, the sealing device can be actuated to seal the aperture and isolate the housing from the reactor.

In the Office Action, claims 1-8 and 12 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Shukunobe et al. (4,965,051). Applicants respectfully submit that Shukunobe neither teaches nor suggests the invention as set forth in amended claims 1 and 12. As set forth in column 7, line 27 through column 8, line 9 of Shukunobe, inner tube 38 in conjunction with net or screen 40 is raised to the upper position when it is desired to wash the biocatalysts contained in the reactor. After washing of the biocatalysts, it is lowered to its normal operating position. It is not retracted in order to repair or replace the filter. Additionally, the reference does not disclose that the housing has at least one sealing device for sealing the aperture between the reactor and the housing, so that when the filter means is retracted within the housing past the aperture, the sealing device can be actuated to seal the aperture and isolate the housing from the reactor.

In the Office Action, claims 1-4, 6, 7 and 12 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Garbo. Applicants submit that these claims would not have been obvious over the Garbo reference for the reasons discussed above with respect to Shukunobe.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants submit that all of the claims are in condition for allowance and favorable consideration by the Examiner is requested. Should the Examiner find

any impediment to the prompt allowance of the claims that could be corrected by telephone interview with the undersigned, the Examiner is requested to initiate such an interview.

Respectfully submitted,

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